Presumably the Hon'ble Member is referring to the supply of soft coke for domestic use in the state of Bihar.

Details of soft coke allocation to the State of Bihar per month since 1993-94 were as follows:

(In tonnes)

1993-94 upto December 93	January, 94 to December, 94		January, 95 to March, 95		April, 95 to March, 96	
Soft Cok	Soft coke	CIL coke	Soft coke	CIL coke	Soft coke	CIL coke
60,000	40,000	20,000	10,000	50,000	10,000	50,000

Since the production of soft coke is decling over the years, the allocations of soft coke were reduced and have been substituted by allocations of CILCOKE so that the total availability of soft coke and CILCOKE for domestic purpose for various States/Union Territories remains unaffected.

(c) Steps taken to increase availability of domestic fuel include;

(i) The State Governments have been requested to make earnest efforts to popularise the use of CILCOKE in their states. This coke is smokeless and ideal for house hold use and has a higher calorific value, though the price is higher as compared to that of soft coke.

(ii) Coal Companies are in a position to supply steam coal in lieu of soft coke allocations to the State Governments. The State Governments may in turn convert this steam coal into soft coke in their respective states.

(iii) Coal India Limited has given linkages to several units for manufacture of briquettes and Special smokeless fuel (SSF). Briquettes produced by these units are better substitute for soft coke. The Government has also relaxed the earlier restrictions of giving linkages to only 4 such units in each district. The State Governments have been requested to monitor production of briquettes by these units and also encourage such new units so as to meet the need of coal based domestic fuels.

New Technologies in Coal Exploitation

10. SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) what new technology is being introduced for the exploitation of coal deposits in areas where difficult geo-mining conditions exist, from the point of view of coal conservation and safety;

(b) what is the nature of the technology being presently made use of;

(c) how does our present technology compare with that in advanced countries; and

(d) by when the most advanced technology would be introduced in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (d) Introduction of new and advanced technologies is a continuous process. Some of the new technologies introduced in the underground coal mines in India for exploitation of coal deposits include Blasting Gallery Method, Sub-level Caving, Shield-mining technique, Kamora or chamber method of mining and powered support longwall mining technology.

These technologies have already been introduced in some of the coal mines in India and according to Coal India Limited (CIL)'s assessment these are at par with the advanced coal producing countries.